

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 20631 211628Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /058 W
----- 082256 /43

R 211530Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1865
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 20631

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IT, VT
SUBJECT: ITALIAN CHUCHMAN'S YEAR-END VIEWS

1. FATHER BARTOLOMEO SORGE, INFLUENTIAL EDITOR OF CIVILTA'
CATTOLICA, MADE FOLLOWING POINTS IN CONFIDENCE TO CHARGE AND
EMBOFFS DECEMBER 20.

2. THE CONCORDAT. THE VATICAN WAS COURAGEOUS IN ACCEPTING THREE
BASIC CHANGES--DO AWAY WITH STATE RELIGION, ACCEPT CIVIL MARRIAGE
REGIME, AND ACCEPT PRINCIPLE OF "LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE." THE
PCI WAS READY TO JOIN THE DC IN APPROVING QUICKLY ANDREOTTI'S
PROPOSAL FOR REVISION OF THE CONCORDAT IN SPITE OF SOCIALIST
OPPOSITION. THE VATICAN ADVISED AGAINST PRECIPITOUS ACCEPTANCE,
PREFERRING GREATER CONSENSUS IN PARLIAMENT. THE VATICAN ALSO DID
NOT WISH TO HAVE REVISION OF CONCORDAT IDENTIFIED IN PUBLIC MIND
WITH ONE OR TWO PARTIES AS THE 1929 CONCORDAT WAS WITH MUSSOLINI.
MOREOVER, JOINT PCI-DC ACTION WOULD HAVE SANTIONED THE "HISTORIC
COMPROMISE". THE SOCIALISTS CHANGED DIRECTION ON THE CONCORDAT
WHEN APPRISED OF PCI APPROVAL. THE CONCORDAT QUESTION HAS FOR ALL
PRACTICAL PURPOSES BEEN RESOLVED. NEGOTIATORS ARE NOW CLARIFYING
CERTAIN ASPECTS OF "ECCLESIASTICAL ENTITIES," PARTICULARLY
ACTIVITIES WHICH COME WITHIN THE SCOPE OF RELIGIOUS PURPOSES.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 20631 211628Z

3. ABORTION LEGISLATION. THE LAW WILL PASS SUBSTANTIALY AS IT
IS BY MID-JANUARY. THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WILL DRAG OUT THE
DEBATE UNTIL AFTER CHRISTMAS. SOME 41 DC MEMBERS HAVE BEEN
INSCRIBED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DEBATE. THE PCI IS STILL WORKING
FOR COMPROMISE WITH DC, BUT SINCE IT WAS FORCED BY ITS BASE TO

AGREE TO THE WOMAN AS FINAL DECISION MAKER, THERE IS PRACTICALLY NO CHANCE OF MEANINGFUL COMPROMISE. ABORTION VOTE WILL NOT BE A "CONFIDENCE VOTE" ON THE GOI SINCE ITS PROGRAM DID NOT INCLUDE ABORTION. ALTHOUGH THE VATICAN WOULD BE EXTREMELY DISPLEASED WITH NEW LEGISLATION, ITS PASSAGE IS UNLIKELY TO DERAIL CONCORDAT NEGOTIATIONS.

4. THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (DC). THE RECENT CONVENTION OF THE ITALIAN CHURCH OCTOBER 30-NOVEMBER 4 REACHED CONSENSUS THAT CHURCH WOULD NO LONGER ASK CATHOLICS TO VOTE AUTOMATICALLY FOR DC. THIS IS THE END OF "COLLATERALISM." CATHOLIC VOTERS ARE FREE TO MAKE POLITICAL CHOICE ON THEIR OWN. THEY CAN VOTE DC IF IT IS MERITED. ZACCAGNINI IN HIS SPEECH TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF DC MENTIONED CONVENTION'S OUTCOME, SAYING THAT THIS IS EXACTLY THE RELATIONSHIP WHICH SHOULD PREVAIL BECAUSE IT COORESPONDED TO DEGASPERI'S THOUGHT OF A LAY PARTY OF CHRISTIAN INSPIRATION. SORGE BELIEVES THAT CONVENTION'S ACTION WILL STIMULATE DC TO CONTINUE PROCESS OF RENEWAL AND REFORM.

5. THE PCI. THE STALINISTS ARE IN THE MINORITY WITHIN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, PERHAPS 20 PERCENT; THEY SUPPORT BERLINGUER RELUCTANTLY. PCI NOW IS AN INTER-CLASS PARTY. ONLY ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF ITS VOTE IS FROM PROLETARIAT. THE WORKERS HAVE DISTRIBUTED THEIR VOTES WIDELY. WHEREAS 60 PERCENT OF THEM VOTED PCI BEFORE, THE NUMBERS NOW ARE DOWN TO 40 PERCENT. AMONG CARD-CARRYING MEMBERS, WORKERS ARE STILL THE PREDOMINANT GROUP. AMONG PCI VOTERS THERE ARE MILLION WHO ARE NOT IDEOLOGICAL ADHERENTS. THEY VOTE PCI BECAUSE THEY WANT PUBLIC ORDER, DISCIPLINE AND EFFICIENCY. THE PCI CANNOT NOW BRING DOWN THE GOVERNMENT. PCI FELL IN ADREOTTI TRAP BY ACCEPTING RESPONSIBILITY (E.G. CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 20631 211628Z

PRESIDENCY OF CHAMBER, PRESIDENCY OF SEVERAL PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONS AND FORMAL SUPPORT OF ECONOMIC STABILIZATION PROGRAM.) THE BERLINGUER WING OF PARTY IS SINCERE IN WANTING RESPONSIBILITY. SENATOR BUFFALINI HAS INDICATED THAT HE AND OTHERS IN CC ALSO WANT TO REVISE THE PARTY STATUTES AND DO AWAY WITH DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM (ART. 5), BUT THEIR INABILITY TO DO THIS SO FAR MAY BE RELATED TO "INTERNATIONAL FACTORS."

6. THE ITALIAN CHURCH. THE CONVENTION OF THE ITALIAN CHURCH (OCTOBER 30 - NOVEMBER 4) WAS FIRST OF ITS KIND IN ITALY. IT WAS CHARACTERIZED BY FREE EXPRESSION FROM A WIDE RANGE OF PARTICIPANTS. (AMONG ITS 1650 PARTICIPANTS THERE WERE 130 BISHOPS 352 PRIESTS AND NUNS AND NEARLY 1200 LAY PERSONS.) THE THEME WAS "EVANGELIZATION AND HUMAN ADVANCEMENT" AND THE "ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN ITALY." THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE WAS TO IDENTIFY SPECIFIC OPERATIONAL ORIENTATIONS BY TRANSLATING INTO PRACTICE THE VATICAN COUNCIL'S CALL FOR "UPDATING" THE CHURCH. FATHER SORGE, WHO WAS ONE OF THE

VICE PRESIDENTS OF THE CONVENTION THOUGHT THAT THERE EMERGED
REMARKABLE CONSENSUS ON TWO ISSUES: ON THE DESIRABILITY OF
"PLURALISM" IN ELECTORAL CHOICES (SEE PARA 4 ABOVE) AND ON THE NEED
TO UPDATE AND RESTRUCTURE CHURCH ACTIVITIES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE
MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN LAYMEN AND BISHOPS.
FATHER SORGE THOUGHT THAT WHILE CONSERVATIVE PRELATES OPPOSED
THIS CONSENSUS, THE NEW RESULT WAS A FRESH IMPULS TOWARD RENEWAL
OF THE CATHOLIC WORLD IN ITALY IN STEP WITH VATICAN COUNCIL II.
ON THE ISSUE OF MARXISM, THERE WAS A LARGE MAJORITY WHICH AFFIRMED
THE INCOMPATIBILITY OF MARXISM-COMMUNISM AND CHRISTIANITY.
ONLY A MINORITY, NUMBERING SOME 25 INDIVIDUALS, DISSENTED SAYING
THAT THERE WERE "POSITIVE VALUES" IN MARXISM WHICH COULD,
THROUGH DIALOGUE OR EVANGELIZATION FROM WITHIN, PRODUCE A
SYNTHESIS COMPATIBLE WITH CHRISTIANITY.BEAUDRY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ROME20631
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760468-0756
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761224/aaaaaumb.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <13 SEP 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ITALIAN CHUCHMAN'S YEAR-END VIEWS
TAGS: PFOR, IT, VT, US, (SORGE, BARTOLOMEO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006